Telecom Policy

1. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the draft telecom policy has since been cleared by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is likely to be announced by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The draft Telecom Policy has not yet been cleared by the Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Waiting List of Telephones in Madhya Pradesh

2. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the earliest date on the waiting list in the general category, exchange-wise and District-wise in Madhya Pradesh telecom circle during 1993-94 and 1994-95 till date;

(b) whether the Madhya Pradesh telecom circle is planning to reduce the waiting list period to two years in each district and exchange on priority basis; and

(c) if so, the details of schemes contemplated in this regard?

THE MINISTEY OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Information is under compilation and will be placed on the table of Rajya Sabha.

(b) and (c) 8th Five year Plan of department of Telecommunication envisage waiting list period not to exceed two years in large Telephone systems and Telephone practically on demand in rural/Tribal areas. During 8th Five year plan it is proposed to add around 4 lakh lines of net switching capacity in Madhya Pradesh to meet the above objectives.

Racket in Subsidised International Calls

3. SHRI G. G. SWELL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governments attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in the Hindustan Times of January 27 that six persons including MTNL employees, were hauled up for operating a racket in subsidised international calls;

(b) if so, whether the report is correct;

(c) whether the racket is widespread;

(d) the estimated loss to the Government exchequer; and

(e) whether Government have also received complaints of false inflated bills and illegal wiring of private telephones to other places from numerous consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STASTE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir. On the basis of a complaint lodged by MTNL Vigilance Branch with the CBI, raids were conducted on 25.01.1994 by the CBI team assited by the MTNL vigilance team. Four employees (three working under Faridabad Telephones and one who worked earlier under MTNL but now transferred out of Delhi) were arrested.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A few such rackets have been investigated by the MTNL vigilance Branch and have been sucessfully busted with the help of the CBI/Police.

(d) It is not possible to estimate the loss as the period of operation is not known.

(e) Yes, Sir. A few complaints of excess bills and diversion of telephones